



554 RUE DES MEURONS

GAUTHIER BLOCK

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2009



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Date of Construction: 1908

Building Permit: 248/1908 (St. Boniface Plumbing Permit)

Architect: Gauthier, Joseph (owner)

Contractor: Tremblay, J.H.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

One of the more unique structures in Winnipeg is this two storey duplex in St. Boniface that was originally a four-suite residential block that has since been converted partially into a commercial block.

The solid stone building measures approximately 14.6 long by 12.2 metres wide by 8.5 metres high. The front (west) façade features four entrances on the main floor, two at the south end of the elevation, one centrally placed and one to the north. The northern and two southern entrances are placed in open porches with unfluted stone columns supporting the second storey decks. The flat roof is embellished with a wide metal cornice.

The side elevations are plain; the rear (east) includes a large wooden structure including decks and staircases.



Rear (east) and north façades, 2009

The architect of the block was the original owner, stonemason Joseph Gauthier. Alfred Monnin, Chief Justice of the Manitoba Court of Appeal (1983-1989) lived in this block as a youth and stated that it was generally accepted in the neighbourhood that the stone used to build the Gauthier Block was leftover material from the St. Boniface Cathedral, which Gauthier had worked on. Nothing else is known about Gauthier at this time.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural conditions. Alterations to the building have included its gutting in 1986 and the creation of retail space on the ground floor, although the exterior has not seen major exterior renovation.

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

Joseph Gauthier is the original owner of this four-suite block. Gauthier owned and lived in one of its suites into the 1940s and by the early 1950s, Calista and William (agent for Broadview Investments) Kalichuk are listed as owners/residents. Tenants of the block have varied and included Frank Baldwin and Van Beneen, A.L. Monnin and Mrs. T. Bertrand (1930).¹ The retail space is now occupied by The Bra Barn.



Front (west) façade, 1988

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance- a unique multi-tenant block built in St. Boniface in the pre-World War I era;
- its associations- its long-term connections to stonemason J. Gauthier;
- its design- N/A;
- its architect- J. Gauthier was a known practitioner;
- its location- contributes greatly to its historic streetscape; and
- its integrity- its main façades continue to display many of their original elements and design.

ENDNOTES:

¹

City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 06-060880000, 1920-1990; Henderson's Directory, 1920-1990.